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BI-CENTENNIAL  
OF THE  
BURNING OF MEDFIELD,  
1676—1876.



# EXERCISES

AT THE

BI-CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION

OF THE

## BURNING OF MEDFIELD BY INDIANS

IN

KING PHILIP'S WAR.

FEBRUARY 21, 1876



MEDFIELD:

PRINTED BY GEORGE H. ELLIS

1876.



## NOTE.

At a late meeting of the citizens, J. B. Hale, George Cummings, and James Hewins, Esquires, were chosen a Committee to take suitable measures for the publication of the address, poem, and other exercises at the Bi-centennial Commemoration of the burning of Medfield by the Indians, in King Philip's War.

This Committee, at their first meeting for consultation respecting the object of their appointment, were tendered by Deacon Cummings the generous offer to assume the entire expense of the publication in view. It is, therefore, to his deep interest in the occasion, and earnest desire to transmit a record of it to future generations, and his continual endeavors to uphold the honor and promote the permanent welfare of the place of his residence, that the citizens are now indebted for the completion of this work.

MEDFIELD, June, 1876.



## PREFACE.

Among the memorable events of the famous war of King Philip against the early settlers of New England, was the attack upon the village of Medfield, in February, 1675. It was probably conducted by a party of the Nipmucks and Wampanoags, a body of Indians who were allied by Philip for the destruction of their common enemy. It was prosecuted with all the wile and cruelty of savage warfare, and resulted in the burning of a large part of the dwellings in the village, and the death of nearly a score of the people. The second Centennial Anniversary of this event was anticipated by the present inhabitants with great interest, and as it would occur on this Centennial year of the nation's life, a desire was universally expressed that it might be marked by a public celebration. Accordingly, a meeting of the citizens was held early in the year for the purpose of taking some action respecting such a celebration. At this meeting, it was voted that the day should be celebrated in a suitable manner. A Committee—consisting of Rev. C. C. Sewall, Rev. J. M. R. Eaton, Jacob R. Cushman, Charles Hamant, and James Hewins, Esquires,—was chosen to make all necessary arrangements for accomplishing the wishes of the people as indicated by their vote.

This Committee immediately projected those arrangements which a suitable recognition of such an event required. Invitations were extended to the authorities and citizens of towns closely allied to our own in former and latter years; to members of the State Government; and to many individuals connected by various ties with past and present residents of the place. Distinguished speakers were solicited to take part in the exercises of the day. Preparations were made for appropriate music and for every other seen necessity of the occasion. And on the morning of the first of February—a day of unusual brightness and mildness of temperature,—the public ceremonies were introduced by ringing of the village bells, and the firing of a national salute by a detachment from Battery B. of the Massachusetts Artillery, under charge of Captain Baxter. A similar salute with ringing of the bells was repeated at noon, and the firing of guns, at fifteen minutes' interval, was continued through

the day. The Town Hall was finely decorated by Beals & Son, of Boston. Music was furnished by the Medfield Band. The hour appointed for the literary exercises of the occasion was 10:30 A. M. And, at this hour, a crowd had assembled which filled the hall to its utmost capacity. The exercises consisted of an opening address by Rev. C. C. Sewall, President of the day; prayer by Rev. J. M. R. Eaton; hymn sung by the audience in the familiar tune of "St. Martin's"; address by Robert R. Bishop, Esq., a native of Medfield and now a resident of Newton; music by the band; and a poem by James Hewins, Esq., a citizen of the town. At this point, a recess was taken for a collation in the vestry of the Unitarian Church. At 2 P. M. the people reassembled in the Town Hall, and the exercises were resumed by singing a beautiful hymn written for the occasion by Rev. J. H. Allen, of Cambridge. This was followed by remarks of invited guests and others in response to sentiments offered by the President of the day. These remarks were listened to by the audience with unabated interest and gratification until the hour of necessary departure had arrived. The meeting was then closed with prayer by Rev. A. M. Crane.

The programme for the day had been carried out with entire success. Nothing occurred to interrupt the proceedings, or to mar the general pleasure, except a disastrous accident which occurred in the morning as many invited guests and other friends were coming from the depot to the Town Hall. This accident was a cause of serious, and it was then feared of fatal, injuries to several aged gentlemen, who had made special effort to be present on the occasion, and whose presence was particularly desired. The thought of their disappointment and greater sufferings cast a shade of sadness over the proceedings; withdrew many persons from the hall, and visibly affected the minds of others who remained. With this exception, the day had completely answered the hopes and wishes of the people; and the record of it is now transmitted to succeeding generations with the earnest wish, that, in the possession of still higher and better advantages than are our own, they may not overlook or undervalue the harder fortunes of the early settlers of Medfield.



## EXERCISES.

OPENING ADDRESS BY REV. CHARLES C. SEWALL, PRESIDENT  
OF THE DAY.

*Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends and Fellow-citizens:—*

In the year 1649, land was granted by the General Court to the town of Dedham, for the erection of a new village on her western border and beyond the river. This land having been laid out by commissioners then appointed, the town, on petition to the next General Court, was named Meadfield; and soon a few hardy adventurers, desirous of more room, and of a better chance to build their fortunes, forsook the good old town once named Contentment, — (a most inviting name, but which to them had been, and must ever be, simply Dedham) — came to reside upon this beautiful plain, near to the meadows of Charles River. But they had scarcely established themselves in comfortable homes, and begun to reap some good fruit from their toils, when they were made to realize the dangers, and to dread the evils to which they were exposed in this then frontier settlement. For Philip, that brave and sagacious Indian chief, had waged, and was now prosecuting, a war of extinction against the white settlers in New England; and on the morning of February 21st, 1675, after numerous assaults upon other settlements, he came stealthily upon Medfield, and with savage cruelty destroyed the village.

We are now at the close of the second century from the date of that event, and are here assembled to commemorate

it. But why, it may be said, why commemorate an event which occurred at a period so distant from the present? Why do we wish to revive and perpetuate the memory of an event so malignant in purpose and so disastrous to the quiet dwellers here? Why not let it be forgotten among the irrevocable deeds of the past? We all know that there is implanted in the human breast a feeling which has prompted men everywhere, and in all ages, to perpetuate the history of their homes. There is an universal disposition to revive and transmit the record of the people and the events of former times. Sharing this feeling, and prompted by this disposition, the citizens of Medfield now wish to revive and perpetuate the memory of an event of unparalleled importance in their local history, and ruinous to the ancestors of many, whose names are most familiar among the present residents of the place. It is an event too which bears relation to the early history of New England, and affords a striking instance of the perils and the sufferings which must have been encountered by the primitive settlers of this portion of our country. We deem it, then, an event not unworthy of special commemoration on this Centennial year of our nation's age. We consider it a duty to past and future generations to record and transmit the record of the names and the experiences of the first founders of our village; and, from the contrast between their times and our own, to draw a lesson which, while it is of touching interest to ourselves, may be of useful incitement to those who will be our successors here.

It is for these reasons that we devote this day, — the second centennial of the event, — to a public commemoration of it. And we are most happy to greet with cordial welcome the many sons and daughters of Medfield who have returned, this day, to their homes, and our invited guests, who honor us with their presence, and whose kindly words, we hope, will prove to us their sympathy and their approval of what we are now aiming to do. And, recognizing the good Providence which has brought us together this morning under circumstances of so much mercy, and in the enjoyment of such superior privileges of every kind, both as individuals and as a community, I

invite you all to join, with the whole heart, in praise and prayer to Almighty God.

Prayer was then offered by the Rev. J. M. R. HATON, after which the following hymn, written for the occasion by the Rev. C. C. SEWALL, was sung by the audience:—

O Thou, to whom the ages past  
Are as the passing day,  
On whom no change will e'er be cast,  
Though Time all else decay,

We praise, to-day, thy loving care,  
Which suffers us no more  
The perils and the griefs to share  
Our fathers bravely bore.

Exposed to wrath of savage foe,  
They dwelt in constant fear:  
His step, how stealthy none could know,  
His deadly shaft how near.

The homes they left they saw no more;  
Bereft of all they were,  
That painful toil and love before  
Had garnered for them there.

But we no warning call now hear  
To bid us flee for life:  
To quit our homes, to us so dear,  
And breast the dreadful strife.

Lord! write the lesson on each heart,  
That we more grateful be,  
And, while we live, may ne'er depart  
From faithfulness to Thee.

Thy servants, Lord! still guard and bless:  
Confirm our trust in Thee:  
And grant that fruit of righteousness  
Our aim and guerdon be.

The PRESIDENT. — I now have the pleasure to introduce to you, as the Orator of the day, a gentleman allied to us, not only as a native of the place, but by every consideration honorable to himself and gratifying to his kindred, and his many

friends. I introduce to you ROBERT R. BISHOP, Esq., of Newton.

ORATION BY ROBERT R. BISHOP, ESQ.

*Mr. President:—*

On the morning of the twenty-first of February, 1675, corresponding in the new style to this day, this town was sleeping under a sense of security and relief. Dwelling for nearly a year in the midst of constant alarms and fears, it had come into safety and under protection. Since the war began its inhabitants had not felt secure until now. Succor, succor had come, and the women lay down to rest with thankful hearts to God, and the men felt that again their homes were safe.

Consider the exposed condition of Medfield at this time. The war began on the 24th of June, at Swansey in the Plymouth Colony, and during the early summer was confined to that colony,—the towns of Swansey, Taunton, Middleborough, and Dartmouth being attacked. Medfield was the outermost town in the Massachusetts Colony against the enemy's country, except Mendon. For a hundred miles southwestward stretched the land of the savage; and if you will look at any of the old maps of that period—that prefixed to Hubbard's Indian Wars, or that prefixed to Cotton Mather's History of the Indian Wars, or those usually accompanying the old historical books of that time,—you will find that our nearest white neighbors in that direction, with the exception of Mendon, were the towns of New London and Saybrook and Hartford, in the Connecticut Colony.

On the 14th of July, John Post was killed on the old Sherburne road—how familiar those words sound—in Mendon; and since the day when John Winthrop landed at Salem, bringing the charter, in 1630, his was the blood of the first Englishman shed in the Massachusetts Colony in warfare. Afterwards Mendon was deemed untenable, and was evacuated and abandoned by its inhabitants, and after that the empty houses were burned by the Indians. Then Medfield

became the outermost sentinel towards the Indian country in this colony.

After leaving the Plymouth Colony, the war passed to the banks of the Connecticut River in the early autumn, and the tales of Bloody Brook,—where your own Robert Hinsdale with three of his sons were slain,—of Deerfield, and of Northfield and Hadley, comprise the story of the Indians' ferocity, and the white man's endurance and martyrdom there.

Up to this time—up to September or October—the real character of the contest had probably been little understood by the whites, and the force and determination of the Indians had been underrated. I suppose it is so in all wars. You remember that in the early days of the Rebellion, so wise and sagacious a statesman as Secretary Seward prophesied that the war would not last three months. So I suppose it was in the Indian time; that some sagacious adviser of Governor Leverett, some Secretary of State—I do not know, sir, but it was Oliver Warner, for he has been Secretary of State until our present administration of Governor Rice, so long I believe that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, and we have heard his name on all Fast days and Thanksgiving days—"God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts—Oliver Warner,"—and I suppose it used to be "God save the Colony of Massachusetts Bay—Oliver Warner,"—prophesied that the affair would be over before midsummer. At all events it was not believed in the beginning that this was a WAR.

But when not only a few towns in Plymouth Colony had been attacked, but the conflict had ravaged from the seaboard to the mountains, and not only one colony, but Massachusetts and Connecticut and Plymouth, and all the towns in all the colonies, were menaced, and Philip was about to spend his winter in the region of Albany, to incite such also as might there be inclined to come against us, the colonists knew that it was a WAR, and prepared themselves accordingly.

Accordingly the commissioners for the allied colonies of Connecticut, Plymouth, and Massachusetts made a levy of a thousand troops from Massachusetts, and a proportionate

number from Plymouth and Connecticut, dividing those from Massachusetts into six companies, and putting them under the command of well-trying captains, and committing the whole "Cheerfully" (as the records of Massachusetts read) to the command of His Excellency Governor Winslow of Plymouth, — and I am happy to state, Mr. President, upon the authority of the newspapers, that he was not the ancestor of our townsman, sir, from Newton, who has lately distinguished himself in another way. You remember the first campaign of that army. Until about this time it was very doubtful whether the Narragansetts would ally themselves or not with Philip. But now there was no doubt about it; and the army, headed by Governor Winslow himself, marched to the country of the Narragansetts in Rhode Island. You remember the details of that memorable march. You remember how the army came upon the Indians entrenched in their fortification in the midst of a vast morass; how they were entrenched behind their stockade, built with large logs, sharpened and driven into the ground; that surrounded by a wall, as the historian says, a rod in thickness, and that by a ditch which it seemed impossible to cross, except by means of a single log, the only apparent means of entrance. You remember how the army was led around to another and secret entrance by a friendly Indian, and how they entered the fort, the Massachusetts troops leading the van, the Plymouth troops following, and the Connecticut troops in the rear. You remember the details of the slaughter which then took place,—a conflict hand to hand and throat to throat; how as the historian tells us seven hundred Indians were killed and one hundred and fifty whites, and the whites lost six of their leaders. You remember that then the whites set fire to the stockade and the fort, and burned up every vestige of it, including the wigwams and huts, and drove the Indians back into the Nipmuck country, and this the historian regards as the great mistake of the day, because, as you remember, a snow-storm coming on immediately, our troops were beleaguered in the wilderness, compelled to march through the blinding fury of the storm for miles and miles back to the

settlements, and thus were unable to pursue the adversary. Thus, although this was a victory, it was a barren victory; when, Increase Mather records, if we had been able to pursue the enemy for twenty-four hours longer, the war would have ended. But Providence had decreed otherwise. Exhausted, worn out, without supplies, the army was compelled to fall back; the vanquished Indians also retreated to their own country, and for a short time there was a truce. The white army re-entered Boston on the 5th of February.

Until now, Medfield had stood the outermost sentinel against the enemy's country, unharmed. The war began on the left of us, raged at the right of us, and the great battle of the War had been fought in front of us, and still we were untouched. Like a rugged pine clinging to the top of a precipice when the storm and the hurricane have levelled every other tree of the forest, so Medfield stood. But it was not difficult to believe that the next onset of the enemy would be upon that cordon of towns which surrounded the centre of the province,—Lancaster, Marlborough, Sudbury, Medfield. Accordingly great alarm was felt in these towns. You remember that the pious minister of one of these towns, Mr. Rowlandson, went upon a journey of entreaty to the Governor and Council, begging for help for his own town, Lancaster; and that as he came back and ascended the hills overlooking Lancaster, he beheld the smoke of its dwellings, his own house among the number, and saw the havoc of its desolation. You remember that his wife was taken captive with her infant child, and how, after being compelled by the savages to follow their wanderings and marches up and down the country, to Wachusett and Northfield, her babe sickened and lingered and died, and she was compelled by their order to leave it on the spot, without the rites of a Christian burial, and to march on; how afterwards she was ransomed and restored at Charlestown to her husband and children except the one who died upon the journey, and how she recounts the mercy of God in her and their preservation.

This was on the 10th of February. Four days after that, and precisely one week before the event in commemoration of

which we are brought together, the ever-vigilant and ever-to-be-revered first minister of this town, Mr. Wilson, wrote to the Governor and Council a letter, which I think you will desire me to read in your presence. It is this:—

HONORED SRs, — Prostrating my humble service vnto your Honors, I had not bin so bold (being so vnfit as I am,) to send these rude lines at present vnto you, while you are so busied on the weighty concernes, and sad occasions respecting the Commonwealth and churches of God. But that wh. I haue to write is about the same things wch yourselves, as y<sup>e</sup> honored fathers of y<sup>e</sup> country are taken vp with, studying night and day to compasse w<sup>t</sup> is most expedient and expeditious for y<sup>e</sup> good and safety of y<sup>e</sup> whole. Captain Oakes, coming fro Marlborough to our towne this second day night,\* we understand by him, (who lately came fro y<sup>e</sup> grizely sight of y<sup>e</sup> ruines of Lancaster,) of y<sup>e</sup> imminent danger y<sup>t</sup> not only Malborough was in wh<sup>o</sup> he left them, but also of y<sup>e</sup> towne of Medfeild, with y<sup>e</sup> village of Sherborne on the other syde of y<sup>e</sup> river, y<sup>e</sup> common enemy (as he understands) bending towards Nipmuck, Sherborne also, by his and y<sup>e</sup> reports of others being threatened next Thursday. Honored Srs, I write in y<sup>e</sup> behalf of y<sup>e</sup> towne. It is our humble request that your Honors would consider us in this juncture of time. We have not till now, made such a motion as this, and could be glad y<sup>r</sup> were not such an occasion. Our towne is a frontier towne. Y<sup>e</sup> loss of Mendham † hath disadvantaged vs. Y<sup>e</sup> losse of Medfeild will be a very greate blow; what will become of y<sup>e</sup> city if the hands of y<sup>e</sup> country grow feeble.

Now y<sup>e</sup> rode from Nipmuck is fair for these caniballs, be pleased for God's sake to remember us, and let some considerable sufficient force be sent to vs for our speedy releife, before it be to late, by y<sup>e</sup> soonest, by y<sup>e</sup> soonest that possibly can be, lest Medfeild be turned into ashes and y<sup>e</sup> smoke of it amaze such y<sup>t</sup> shall behold it; Oh, let not one day passe without preparations herevnto, tho they come in y<sup>e</sup> night. Captin Oakes is not constantly with us, but is in severall motions fro hence to Marlborough, and thro' some difficultyes he meetes with in regard to fodder for horses, w<sup>ch</sup> is very scarce, would be glad your Honors would signify further of your minds w<sup>t</sup> he should do; and by these meanes we haue no certain helpe at hand.

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\* The second day of the week, Monday.

† Mendon.



Not further to trouble your Honors, but hoping your compassionate hearts will and do consider us, humbly returne our hearty thankfullnesse and acknowledgements for your undeserved favour in sending out forces to visit us, and to scout about for discovery of our dangers, humbly begging ye continuall assistance of ye Almighty to be with you in all yr weighty concernes yt ly on yor hands, and smiles of ye Lord's divine fauor on his poore distressed people.

So prayes

Your Honors' humble servant,

Feb. 14th 75.  
Medfield.

JOHN WILSON.

The original of that letter, sacred to every son of Medfield, is in the keeping of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in its archives among its State papers, and there may it remain forever! I know not, friends, in what books you read the legends of pathos, or find the entreaties of prayer; but for myself I know of nothing in the language of entreaty or of supplication more calculated to stir the heart, than that letter of your first minister.

The Governor responded. A force, consisting of a company of eighty men of infantry, under the command of Capt. John Jacob, and a company of horse, about twenty, under command of Capt. Edward Oakes, was sent for our relief, and quartered in the town. These, together with the train-band of the town, numbering about one hundred, under command of Lieut. Henry Adams, constituted a sufficient force for its defence against any enemy which could be anticipated. Thus, on the day when Medfield was attacked, it was probably better able to repel the attack than at any other period of the war; and it was this sense of security, this fatal reliance upon it, which probably caused the disaster.

The general appearance of Medfield, its characteristics and features at that time were probably more like what they are now than those of most towns. Instead of a nearly direct highway as now from Dedham, the road turned to the left at Walpole corner, and passing through a valley came out near the eastern slope of Mount Nebo, at the house of Isaac

Chenery, which was situated in what is now a pasture, a few rods to the east of the house where Mrs. Coltman resides. There it probably divided into two forks, one passing around on the eastern side of Mount Nebo, and coming out near the house of Samuel Bullen, which was a few rods in the rear of the residence of the late Mr. Daniels Hamant, running across the present south road and entering the village through what is now Pleasant Street. It then continued northward, substantially over the present line of North Street, passing the house of Capt. Sadey, afterwards Barrachias Mason's, afterwards Johnson Mason's, and now in the possession and about to become the residence of your citizen, Mr. John J. Adams; and then continued northwardly toward the settlement at Sherburne and the Nipmuck country, past the house now in the ownership of Mr. Lorenzo Harding. The other fork of the road from Dedham probably came across to the house of Samuel Morse, which was near the present residence of Misses Lucy and Mary Morse, and continued in very much the same direction as the present main street, through the village, but turned to the right before reaching the river, which it crossed about half way between the present turnpike bridge and Brastow's bridge. The site of the bridge as it then existed is marked by large rocks, I believe, on either side, now remaining. There were four garrisons in the town. The first was at the house of Isaac Chenery, at the location I have mentioned, and the remains of it are still existing and very plainly to be discerned. It is a spot of interest, and well worth a visit to examine. It is situated upon a knoll or rise of land, upon the borders of a large swamp. To be seen at the present time are the remains of the stockade, in almost the exact form of a horseshoe, and in nearly the middle the almost perfectly square cellar of the old house. The corners are as plainly to be discerned as any portion. The stockade surrounded a place perhaps twice as large as this hall, and was doubtless constructed of pointed timbers driven into the ground and supported and backed by an earthwork.

The second garrison was at the house where Mr. Bradford Curtis now lives; the third at the Capt. Sadey house, now

Mr. Adams's; and the fourth at the present residence of Mr. Lorenzo Harding. Probably there are no houses now standing in the town which were standing on the day when it was burned. The venerable Peak House, so justly the subject of curiosity and veneration, was probably built some years later at another place, and moved to its present spot, though the smaller building by its side, which some of you I am sure remember, and which was once used, tradition says, for a weaver's shop, was doubtless standing when the town was burned. The two elm-trees in front of Miss Sarah Bosworth's were probably standing at that time,—saplings then; how short is our life compared with their lives; how little do we know of the history of this town compared with what they have witnessed. On the spot where we are assembled stood the house of the minister, John Wilson. It was probably the finest dwelling-house in the town. It had an overhanging second story for protection against the Indians, or for fashion's sake, as the custom then was,—it matters little which. Across North Street, the first house was that of Ralph Wheelock, the first signer of the compact to remove to Medfield, and the founder *par excellence* of the town, some of whose representatives I am glad are present with us to-day. Robert Hinsdale's house was across the brook where your estimable citizen, Mr. Cummings, now lives; and the well dug by Hinsdale I believe is still in existence upon the estate. At first all buildings upon the main road in the centre of the town for some reason, of the nature of which I am ignorant, were erected upon the north side, and none upon the south side. The large tract of plain land to the southward was devoted to cultivation without dwellings, and so remained for a considerable period later. The first house built upon the south side was that of Richard Mann many years later, which stood where Mr. Barney's store now is. As I do not like to state historical facts without being pretty sure that I am supported by authority, and as an estimable lady of Medfield has furnished me with what I think some of our friends would term a legal document, and which may interest the present owners of the price of land to which it relates, I will refer to

it. It is a sort of affidavit made apparently in the year 1753, and after the piece of land had been sold to Mr. Richard Mann, and this is the way it reads:—

SHERBURNE, May the first, 1753.

These few lines may signify to whom it may concern, that I, the subscriber, being at the house of Deacon Wheelock four years ago, when Mr. Richard Mann was there, about making a bargain about a piece of land which the said Wheelock was very loth to sell, because the said Wheelock said he would keep fowls and would do him damage, which the said Mann did declare and did promise the Deacon that he would keep no fowls of his own; and furthermore he promised that he would keep off Crowner Fisher's fowls. These few lines above said is truth according to my best remembrance.

[Signed]

BENJA. MUZZY.

Attest: JOHN DEATH.

Now that raises a very important point of law, interesting at least to Mr. Barney, and if he is present I would call his attention to it, whether or not that promise to keep no fowls, and, further, to keep off Crowner Fisher's fowls, is a covenant which runs with the land; and as I think we had better settle questions as they arise, and as we have many eminent members of the legal profession present, the distinguished Chairman of the Judiciary Committee of our House of Representatives for so many years among the number, and the distinguished gentleman who comes from the town of Sturbridge, your offshoot, I rather think after we get through with these proceedings, if I do not make them too long, we had best organize a court, make Mr. Hamant chief-justice, and we will have it out, arranging the lawyers on either side; and we will find out by a judicial decision whether Mr. Barney is now obliged to keep off his own fowls, and furthermore obliged to keep off Crowner Fisher's fowls.

Many of the families now live where their ancestors then lived. The Morses live where the Morses lived. The Masons live where the Masons lived. Mr. William Kingsbury lives where his ancestors the Plymptons lived. The Al-

lens—that family who are doing noble work in so many of the departments of life and labor throughout the country and the nation, one of whom wrote the delightful hymn you will sing, and another of whom, coming in fidelity to the instinct and the love of his old town to be with us to-day, met with the accident, which we hope is not so serious as at first it seemed,—the Allens live where the Allens then lived. Your respected townsman, Mr. John Ellis, whose youthful heart makes his old age green, lives on the spot which the town granted to his ancestor of the same name. And Henry Adams has not been without descendants, even unto the present generation, to till the fields which he owned. The brook runs parallel to the street, as the brook then ran. As we think, friends, of the generations which have lived upon its banks, how the verse of the poet comes to the mind,—

“I chatter, chatter, as I flow  
To join the brimming river;  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on forever.”

The meeting-house stood where the meeting-house now stands,—a plain, simple, austere building, but to their vision it was “the house of God, the very gate of Heaven.” Into this house at the beat of the drum every Lord’s day they came to worship the God of their fathers. Some of them came on foot through the paths of the forest for weary miles and miles, with wife and children, and the trusty matchlock carried along for protection. In this way some came from that part of Wrentham which is now the town of Norfolk; and Joseph Morse came with his wife from across the river in Sherburne from their new house which they had built near the site of Holbrook’s mills.

Here they assembled on Sunday, February 20th. It was no ordinary company. You could not have found such a company outside of New England unless you had gone to Old England; and there you would have found its precise parallel among the followers of Cromwell and John Milton. In addition to the usual company, there were present on that day the

soldiers quartered in the town; and they had brought, each one, soldiers and citizens, their muskets for protection. They sang a hymn,—sang it without the accompaniment of instrumental music which they thought was profanation; sang it in the melody of Puritan voices; sang it out of the “Bay Psalm Book,” a book now so rare that a single copy of it is the subject of litigation before our highest court; sang it to one of the five or six tunes which constituted their only stock of music. Mr. Wilson doubtless delivered an extemporaneous discourse, as the custom then was, and probably before he had finished the hour-glass was turned. The subject and the matter of that sermon we know not; but we do know that this town and the people of his charge lay like a weight upon his soul; and, therefore, we know that the tradition which says that he warned his people to be vigilant against surprise is true. He prayed,—and with the weight of the town and the people on his soul, he committed them to the God of armies and the God of mercy. He saw in a vision, as Abraham saw by the revelation of God, the great people which was to come from that seed, and he pleaded the promises. Would God cut them off? Would he extinguish the hope? As Jacob wrestled with the angel so wrestled Mr. Wilson in prayer that day, and would not cease without the blessing. With the faith of a Puritan, he lodged them at the gate of heaven, and placed them underneath the almighty power, and they were safe!

The company separated, and the tradition is that as they left the meeting-house looking across the open plain, with nothing to obstruct the view, they saw Indians on Noon Hill. I have never been disposed to credit this tradition, but now I must confess that it is probably true. There was nothing to shut off the sight. The land was cultivated land, without obstruction; and the base and sides of the hill were not then covered as now with wood, but were used for pasturage. It probably was, as in the scene described by the poet after the departure of the Mayflower upon her homeward voyage. You remember the scene,—after the embarkation, the rustling of the cordage, the farewells—not to any of their own company, for none went back, but to the ship and its company,

their last connecting link with England,—the sending of messages to friends in England, the bustling about of the captain, the weighing of the anchor, and the vessel had left her moorings, had rounded the point of the Gurnet, and stood out to sea, and grew fainter and fainter against the horizon, and finally became a speck and then disappeared,

“Lo! as they turned to depart, they saw the form of an Indian  
Watching them from the hill: but while they spake with each other,  
Pointing with outstretched hands, and saying, ‘Look!’ he had vanished.”

John Wilson walked to his house that night, in the serene trust and faith of a Puritan.

There was another man in that company, no less a Puritan, whose experiences as he walked to his home were different from those of any others of the congregation. If we may judge of his character by what he did that day, and by what we know of his posterity, he was a grim-visaged Puritan, who lived in the fear of God, but in every other sense knew no such word as fear.

He left the meeting-house, went down the south road, kept on past the house of Samuel Bullen, until the road began to become a path, followed it, entered the thicket of woods, which stood upon the eastern slope of Mount Nebo, and there beheld on the right of him, and on the left, skulking behind the trees, Indians! He knew what that meant. Two courses were open to him: one was to turn back and endeavor to inform the town; the other was to keep on. If he had turned back, his wife and children, beyond the thicket, would have perished! Aye, if he had turned back he could not have gone five rods alive, and the town would have been uninformed, and his wife and children would have perished also. He hesitated not a moment. The blood came quickly to his temples; but he moved not a muscle of his face, he quickened not his step; he looked neither to the right nor to the left; he kept on. If he was musical, as some of his descendants have been, he hummed some old Puritan psalm, the better to put the savages off their guard. He emerged from

the thicket; he came out on the open land; he ascended the hillock; he saw the smoke of his own chimney curling from the square house inside the stockade; he walked on; he entered the house; what was he to do then? In the name of Christ, where was relief to come from then? A mile and a half from the village, three hundred Indians between him and that, what should he do? Should he and his wife and three children undertake to cut their way back again to the village? It was suicide! Should he bolt the doors, and load his match-lock, and be ready for the onslaught which he knew would come in the morning? One man, one woman, three children, against three hundred savages,—it was death! Should he leave the garrison on the other side, and rush with these fleeing ones eight miles through the forest to Dedham? A hundred hounds let loose from hell were on their track, and he could not do it! He attended to the usual duties of the day, went to his barn, took care of affairs about the house; he locked the doors at the usual hour; he put out the candles at the ordinary time, and lay down upon his bed,—yes, in the jaws of death he lay down! He knew what the darkest hour of that night, toward morning, was; and when, after the agony of watching, the hour came, he took his wife and his three children, Isaac, Benjamin, and Mary, without noise opening the latch and creeping out; he came down to the valley, between that hillock and the opposite one; went into the thicket which skirted the swamp on the other side, careful not to break a twig or crackle a leaf; so they kept on toward where Simeon Richardson lives now, and there, in the cranberry meadow, he hid them under the protection of a great rock. They were probably safe; and now what does he do? Reckless of danger for himself, back he comes, and indeed it was time! As he came back the darkness broke, the gray of the morning twilight began to appear, the rays of the eastern sun to pencil the sky; and as he mounted the other hillock, opposite to the one where his own house stood, he saw the savages battering at his door, and the torch applied to his barn. Reckless, careless, mounting the crest of the hill, with the woods behind him, pointing to the savages, and beckoning to imaginary troops behind him, he shouted at the top of his



voice, "Come on, boys! come on! There they are! come on! there they are!" A panic seized the savages; back they rushed, and toward the town they came. His name was ISAAC CHENERY. If he was not the model of a Puritan, I know not where to find one!

Samuel Morse, just before day, went to his barn to feed his cattle. He uncovered the leg of an Indian on his hay-mow. He had barely time to reach his house and get his family to the garrison before the house was in flames. The burning of that house at the eastern part of the town was the signal for the burning of the other parts of the town. Instantly the other houses were in flames, and the savages were at their work. A poor woman living near the site of the old Isaiah Smith house tried to get to the brook for the cover of its thicket, with her child. She was shot, and the child crawled over her breast crying, "Bloody! bloody! bloody!" They came to a poor man on the south road, demented of his wits, and shot at him, and he cried out at them, "What are you doing? You will hurt me; you will hurt somebody." They fired again, and the rags and the tatters fell from him, and he said, "There, I told you so; I told you you would hurt somebody." They came up to him, and, examining him, said, "Hobamoc"—which, in their tongue, meant the Devil,—“we no kill him.” Lieut. Henry Adams, rushing out, half-dressed, to find his men and take the command of them, was shot in his doorway. The mother of Samuel Smith, on the south road, was knocked in the head, and her child flung into the air and left for dead; but by God's mercy he lived to a good old age.

The Indians did not come near the centre of the town, but crossing the main road came out again upon the north road in front of the house of Thomas Mason. His wife fled to the garrison with the youngest child, and he is the ancestor of the Masons now living among you. The father and the other sons were killed on their way to the garrison. In one of the burning dwellings, John Fussell, aged beyond the lot of man, infirm and unable to move, perished with the house.

All this occupied the shortest possible space of time. Among the whites all was confusion, consternation, and alarm. Their first impulse was for the women and children. "To the

garrisons, to the garrisons with them!" was the cry. The drum beat to arms for the soldiers, and the cavalry mounted the saddleless horses. Whether there were three hundred Indians or three thousand, nobody could tell. Somebody rushed to the alarm-gun to give the alarm to Dedham. It was fired once,—it was fired twice; the savages fell into a panic and a rout; and all, to a savage, rushed to the bridge leading to the Nipmuck country, crossed it, put the torch to it as they crossed,—and it was over. The hurricane of war had passed; eighteen lay dead; above half the houses were burned; and the town was in sack-cloth and ashes.

Then Mr. Wilson sent his despatch to Governor Leverett and the council:—

HONORED S<sup>ES</sup>,

in a hurry hast: you may please to understand that on y<sup>e</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> day morning early, we were beset w<sup>th</sup> Indians a greate number to our amazement although we had considerable watches: I thinke about halfe y<sup>e</sup> towne is fired: many wounded, severall slayne, after we had fyred: our greate gun twice for to warne dedham of our danger & anoth<sup>r</sup> it startled y<sup>e</sup> Indians, at last after much spoyle y<sup>y</sup> ran over y<sup>e</sup> bridge, fired it as y<sup>y</sup> left it, ran to sherborne fired the rounds. we we hope George fairbanks pallsade y<sup>r</sup> safe. w<sup>t</sup> y<sup>e</sup> rest we know not ar: not w<sup>thout</sup> an expectation of the tommorrow morning, it is thought y<sup>y</sup> lay y<sup>e</sup> way at dedham rode by those y<sup>t</sup> came fr<sup>o</sup> theure this night to se how it was w<sup>th</sup> us, so y<sup>t</sup> dedham is not w<sup>thout</sup> greate danger: y<sup>r</sup> is greate need of helpe suddenly to keepe our town, or to follow them if quite gone. 2 mills burnt

Your honors' humble

servants	JOHN WILSON
	EDWARD OAKES
	JOHN JACOB
	GEORGE BARBAR:

By our guess nigh a 1000 Indians.

No sooner had he written and sent that despatch than he received one from the enemy. Capt. Gibbs of Watertown brought this, which the Indians had written and posted by the bridge as they crossed into the Nipmuck country:—

Know by this paper that the Indians that thou hast provoked to wrath and anger, will war these twenty-one years if you will.

There are many Indians yett. We come three hundred at this time. You must consider that the Indians loose nothing but their lives. You must leave your fair houses and cattle.

That night Elizabeth Paine, the wife and now the widow of Henry Adams, was lying in an upper room in Mr. Wilson's house on this spot. She had come to the house of the minister as to a refuge and a sanctuary. Capt. Jacob and the soldiers were taking leave of Mr. Wilson and the others in the room below. His gun accidentally discharged, and she was added to the list of the dead.

Since then, for two hundred years, the morning sun has risen upon this town; but its rays have enkindled into life no such scene of blood and carnage and dismay. For two hundred years the evening twilight has descended upon this peaceful village; but its parting ray has lingered and dwelt upon no scene so fitted to stir the deepest emotions of the human heart. Since then, in your streets and households, the tireless hand of man's industry, the faithful round of woman's duty, have not ceased; but never was the work taken up so despairingly, never did the labor drag so heavily, as on that dismal morning after the massacre.

When all was over, they lay down to rest. Exhausted and faint they fell at length into slumber. In dreams again they felt the scalping-knife at their throats, the tomahawk at their breasts. In dreams again the flames of their own dwellings lit the lurid sky, and the war-whoop rang through the street and resounded from dwelling to dwelling. "Alas," they cry, "why was I left, and these, my wife, my husband, my children, taken? Aye, why was I born to see this day? Is God angry with me? Why has he brought me here? Was it for this that I left kith and kin in old England?" Rachel mourned for her children and would not be comforted because they were not. And as Joshua prayed unto God, so they broke out in agony, "Oh Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people out from over Jordan to deliver us into the land of the Amonites to destroy us? Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side of Jordan!"

Ah! friends, let us answer this question which they could

not so clearly answer. Why were these men here? Aye, why were these women here? What could have tempted them to exchange luxury in England for straightness in America? Why should they have exchanged plenty and comfort there for want and suffering here? What motives could fasten upon men with hearts and women with fears, to induce them to sunder at once and forever the ties that bind man to all that is precious in this life,—friends, kindred, home, country,—and seek to abide in the wilderness with the savage? Looking back upon their act from this period of time, with the light of centuries flashing the explanation over it, let us reverently acknowledge that they were here in fulfilment of the great purpose of Almighty God to found upon this continent a nation and a people after his own heart.

For one, I cannot sufficiently express my sense of the absoluteness of the truth that the founders of New England were set apart of God for this great purpose! Look at the facts. The entire emigration which peopled this country took place inside of ten years. Few came who remained prior to 1630; after 1640, nobody came. Twenty thousand persons came between 1630 and 1640. As soon as the Long Parliament assembled, and they had the shadow of a hope of liberty in England, and the least hope and expectation of worshipping God according to their consciences there, not a man came. Not a man went back, thank God; but not a man in addition came.

Who were they? They were men and women whom no inducement whatever could have brought to this country, except fidelity to conscience! Why was it that the earlier expeditions, fitted out at the greatest expense under royal patronage, and with every worldly means of success, failed, and ignominiously failed? Why did Jamestown, and the settlement at the mouth of the Kennebec, fail? In the language of the historian, it was because in the providence of God the pretensions of the mighty and the power of the strong were denied, in order that the country might be delivered unto those whom the great and the mighty despised for their insignificance, and persecuted for their uprightness. It was not

the plaudit of a friend, it was the confession of an enemy, who said that the spark of liberty had been kept alive in England during the dark generations by the Puritans alone; and that to them,—to the Puritans,—to such men as your fathers and mine, England owes the entire freedom of her constitution. It was then to preserve this spark of liberty, to preserve this spark and bring it here,—yes, that it should become a flame which should inflame the country and encircle the world,—it was for this that our fathers came.

And now, friends, why do we celebrate this day? Why do we come here? It is not that we can add anything to their fame, but it is that we may derive strength and power from the contemplation of their virtues. I will tell you why it is: it is because the honor of the heroic dead is the inspiration of posterity! The important question, the present question, is, whether we are true to the principles of our fathers. It is not given to every man to be placed in conspicuous positions, where his actions may be recounted on subsequent days. There were many widows in Zion, in the days of the Prophet Elias, but only unto one was the prophet sent, unto Sarepta, and unto a woman who was a widow. So the exploits of that fatal day have so far passed out of remembrance that we cannot recount all the heroes, or all the exploits which they performed. The deeds of that trusty man, John Turner, who bore the gun that you see before you,—the work of him that day, whose name is now forgotten, who carried the sword you have brought here, in honor of the nameless captain,—have passed out of memory. Take, therefore, the most conspicuous instance of that day, multiply it by the names of all the founders of this town; multiply the bravest deed of that day by the Wheelocks, by the Morses, by the Hamants, by the Masons, by the Allens, by the Wights, by the Turners, by the Bullens, by the Plymptons, and all the other names; then multiply that by every hamlet and every settlement in the colony, and then you shall see what seed-grain God planted in this country for the fulfilment of his almighty purposes.

Pass over the interval since then. Remember that for one hundred and ninety years, until the year 1830, there was no

emigration to America, and that they and their descendants lived here to multiply, a truly homogeneous people, if ever there was one. See them then, comprising one-third of the population of the United States, with their descendants in every part of it, still faithful to the old Puritan virtues. Look upon the revolution accomplished. See the rebellion finished, and the blot of slavery forever wiped away,—and tell me if America is a failure.

And, friends, when we think of the new and luxurious blossoms which come out from that old Puritan root, how we thank God and fire our hearts with joy! And how is the statement of old John Robinson fulfilled, that God had yet further truth to break forth out of his word and in his providence! Think of such a life! Think of such a life as has just closed in Boston! Think of a man devoting his youth, his maturity, his old age, that the blind may have their sight; that the deaf may hear; that all maniacs, and poor and unfortunate people, and God's afflicted children shall have light and hearing and deliverance! Oh, you need not go so far as that. Think of the charities and of the benevolence of the present day! Remember (if it is not in bad taste to speak of it here) one of your own citizens, whose name I will forbear to mention, possessed now of an ample fortune, who has given away more money than he has left,—and the number of the institutions and individuals who have been touched by the electric force of his charity, you cannot recount; and over whose gravestone, when he dies, you will wish to chisel the inscription found in an old Puritan grave-yard in England, "What others kept they lost; what this man gave, that he has"!

Tell me then, friends, if with these examples, if this be the spirit, if with this new fruit of the Puritan tree, the republic of the New World is to perish!

On the first leaf of your church-records is placed one of the most touching recitals which I remember to have read. It is the relation of Samuel Smith who was thrown into the air and left for dead, when his mother was killed on the south road. When people were admitted into the church then, the minister required their relations in writing; and among those which

are preserved, taken by Mr. Baxter, the successor of Mr. Wilson, is that of Samuel Smith. He was then at the age of maturity. After recognizing the infinite goodness of God in preserving his life on that occasion, he says, "My grandfather would be constantly putting me in mind that it was not for nothing that I was saved." Ah, friends, it was "not for nothing" that he was saved. It was "not for nothing" that Medfield went through the fire and blood that day, or that the Puritans were driven to these shores, and laid the foundations of this nation; but it was for all that is valuable to man, or precious in the sight of God! The sixth President of the United States, the most distinguished kinsman of Henry Adams, the Lieutenant of the Town who was shot in his doorway that day, unless it be his own illustrious father, the second President, said that "Massachusetts was a colony of conscience." So were they all—all the New England colonies—colonies of conscience. God grant that as the ages roll, the grand old Commonwealth which has grown out of that colony, and the glorious nation which that Commonwealth has done so much to create and to preserve, may be a State and a nation of conscience, forever.

The PRESIDENT. — I have the pleasure now to introduce to you the Poet of the day, one of the sons of Medfield. His kindred and friends are gratified by the character he sustains, and are this day most happy to know that he possesses the gift of song.

The Poem was then read by the author, JAMES HEWINS, Esq., of Medfield.

#### A LEGEND OF MEDFIELD.

"In some houses the wife running away with one child, the husband with another, of whom the one was killed, the other escaped." — *Hubbard's "Indian Wars,"* p. 62.

Through mist of years departed,  
Down vistas all divine,  
Come echoes of a legend,  
A lay of olden time.

Upon a peaceful hamlet,  
 When Winter's sun rolled low,  
 The morning dawned in brightness  
 Two hundred years ago.

The same hills watch the valley  
 That guarded it of yore;  
 The same sun lights the river  
 That wanders to the shore:  
 The rest of that bright picture,  
 Unrolled before the day,  
 Time's all-effacing fingers  
 Have slowly worn away.

Upon the chilly night-wind,  
 When all the earth was still,  
 The foeman's signal echoed  
 From valley up to hill:  
 When slowly came the dawning,  
 Like wolves the foe crept down,  
 And prayers and war-cries blended  
 Above a blazing town.

And rode that day a charger,  
 Whose phantom hoof-beats ring  
 Down Time's enchanted valleys,  
 The Wampanoag King,—  
 A warrior brave and daring,  
 For whose rejected name,  
 At the judgment day of nations,  
 Some honor may remain.

But fairer than the romance  
 Time weaves round Philip's name,  
 Or the immortal valor  
 That won our fathers' fame,  
 The deed of pure devotion,  
 The simple, homely lay,  
 The guardian hills surrounding,  
 Beheld and heard that day.

Upon the hamlet's border,  
 Within the valley fair,  
 Where south-winds loved to linger  
 And flowers perfumed the air,—



Dwelt with a wife and children,  
 While years in gladness ran,  
 Unvexed by England's priesthood  
 An exiled Puritan.

A peaceful, quiet yeoman,  
 Who ever daily trod,  
 By brighter hopes attended,  
 The pathway of his God;  
 A brave, devoted woman,  
 Whose name and lineage fair  
 The daughters of the hamlet  
 In after-years should bear.

Upon that doleful morning,  
 When, on the winter air,  
 Rose from the lips of many  
 The unavailing prayer:  
 And when the dreaded war-whoop  
 On cradled slumber fell,  
 And to the mother's listening  
 Came like a funeral knell,—

A courage superhuman  
 Infusing all her soul,  
 "John, take thy Mary," said she,  
 "For now the alarm-drums roll,—  
 And I will go with Richard:  
 Thou through the woods, and I  
 Across the field and meadow  
 Will to the fortress fly.

"And if," she said, "while living,  
 We meet again no more,  
 We'll wait each other's coming  
 On the eternal shore."  
 Then they embraced in silence  
 And kissed a long farewell,  
 And, parting in the morning,  
 Met not when evening fell.

The bolts of death above her  
 Low hurtled in the air,  
 And through the valley echoed  
 The wild cries of despair.

The faces of her kindred,  
 The voices of the dead,  
 The vision of the future,  
 Inspired her as she fled.

She sees a band of women,  
 Devoted, noble, brave,  
 Co-workers with our fathers,  
 This lovely land to save;  
 She sees a race of heroes,  
 Of yeomen firm and true,  
 Who pierced the outer darkness  
 Till the light of God shone through.

She sees a peaceful village:  
 Upon a fairer one,  
 In his unceasing cycles,  
 Ne'er shone the golden sun!  
 But Death, that restless angel,  
 Who roams the earth and sea,  
 Descending from the hillside,  
 Crossed over to the lea.

For when the sun declining  
 His golden glory shed  
 Upon the smoking ruins,  
 The living and the dead,—  
 He threw a heavenly halo  
 Around the upturned face  
 Of that heroic mother,—  
 The child in her embrace.

But hark!—upon Time's pinions  
 And through the vale of years,  
 In space forever rumbling  
 And rolling with the spheres,  
 Comes faintly to our listening  
 The booming of a gun:  
 To-day in tones of thunder  
 The thrilling answers come.

They wake the buried echoes:  
 They rush upon the soul,  
 As storm-tossed waves of ocean  
 On slumbering beaches roll.

Again the foe is flying  
 In terror through the lea;  
 The river bears the tidings  
 In triumph to the sea.

Now softly comes the twilight  
 Of centuries ago:  
 Within the deepening shadow  
 Retires the vanquished foe:  
 Upon the fading landscape  
 Descends the night of years,  
 And through the mystic gateway  
 The vision disappears.

Then in that woeful gloaming,  
 When the last dark foe had fled,  
 The father and the daughter  
 Sought their beloved dead.  
 They found them in the meadow,  
 Where now the willows wave  
 And wild-flowers bloom forever  
 Above their nameless grave.

Till yonder hills shall crumble,—  
 Our river melt away  
 As night-engendered vapors  
 Before the dawn of day,—  
 The memory of that mother,  
 Enshrined in every soul,  
 Will brighten through the future  
 While ages onward roll.

Let endless generations  
 This hallowed story know  
 Of martyrdom heroic  
 Two hundred years ago!  
 And children's children listen,  
 When evening shadows fall,  
 To catch the sound of hoof-beats  
 And hear the foeman's call.

After music by the band, a recess of one hour was taken for a collation in the vestry of the Unitarian Church.

At about two o'clock, P. M., the congregation re-assembled

in the hall, and a hymn written for the occasion, by the Rev. J. H. ALLEN, of Cambridge, was sung.

Silent and still the Sabbath light  
 Had faded in the west;  
 The village homes and scattered farms  
 Were sinking into rest.  
 Silent and still, by rock and hill,  
 Lay hid the savage foe;  
 So night came down on fort and town  
 Two hundred years ago.

The skulking savage, stealthy, slow,  
 Through all that wintry night,  
 Crept close by homestead, fence, and barn,  
 To wait the dawning light.  
 The morning came, with sudden flame,  
 That lit the waste of snow;  
 And blazed the pyres of fifty fires  
 Two hundred years ago.

We tread the fields our fathers trod;  
 We walk our fathers' ways;  
 The same, the everlasting God  
 We seek in prayer and praise.  
 Their harder lot—we share it not;  
 Nor may our children know  
 What terrors, prayers, and griefs were theirs  
 Two hundred years ago.

The PRESIDENT. — Ladies and gentlemen, the year, you remember, is Leap year, as well as Centennial year; and, therefore, we cheerfully concede to the young ladies present the privilege to speak first on this occasion, as we would always concede to their sex the claim to be remembered and honored, on all occasions, as chief promoters of the welfare and happiness of the community, on whose loyalty to the best interest of the State and of the nation we may always safely rely. If there is no young lady or maiden lady in the audience who will respond, may we not hope that there is some young man here who will honor himself by speaking in their behalf?

[No one volunteered to respond.]

THE PRESIDENT. — I had hoped and confidently expected that I should have the privilege and pleasure to announce to you the presence of His Excellency the chief magistrate of the Commonwealth. In place of this gratification, however, I must read to you a letter expressing his regret that he cannot be here.

Boston, Feb. 14th, 1876.

*Rev. Charles C. Sewall, Medfield, Mass. : —*

DEAR SIR, — I have received your valued favor of the 14th inst., with an invitation to the ceremonies commemorative of the burning of Medfield in the war of Philip against the early settlers of New England. I beg you to accept my hearty thanks for this courtesy, and were it consistent for me to absent myself from duties here on that day, I should greatly enjoy the promised pleasures of your celebration. I now see that I shall not be able to leave Boston on Monday next.

I am, dear sir, with great respect, yours very truly,

ALEX. H. RICE.

THE PRESIDENT. — Passing over several other leading members of the State Government, I offer you now a sentiment relating to "The Judiciary of the State," whose intelligence and integrity are of the greatest importance to the people. We rejoice that it is still honored by the appointment of members eminently qualified to sustain its best character, and to fulfil the high purpose for which it was established; and as no member of that body is now present, I will call upon the Hon. Mr. COGSWELL, Chairman of the Committee of the Judiciary in the present Legislature, to respond.

REMARKS OF HON. JOHN B. D. COGSWELL.

*Mr. President, Ladies, and Gentlemen : —*

As will be seen by the manner of introduction of your honored President, my connection with the Judiciary of Massachusetts is indeed of the slightest; but as the Persian proverb says, "If we cannot be the rose, it is at all events sweet to be near the rose", and it happened to me to be born near the spot which contributed to the Bar and to the Judiciary of this Commonwealth two names

which ever will be honored by the people of this State. I refer to the village of Great Marshes, in Barnstable County, which contributed first in the colonial days, in the year 1725, James Otis, Jr., whose magnificent argument in 1760 upon the writs of assistance in Boston, John Adams said, who heard it, "breathed into American independence the breath of life." And on the same spot was born in 1780 that Chief Magistrate of the Commonwealth, Lemuel Shaw, who held the scales of justice for us so that no man could see them quiver in his hand.

You have here in Norfolk County two distinguished members of the Judiciary, whom I understand from the President he had expected to introduce to you,—the venerable and learned Judge Wilkinson, of Dedham, and that other junior member of the bench, Judge Colburn, with whom I had the pleasure to be a schoolmate in my youth, who I believe has endeared himself by his manly, honorable, and able course at the bar to the people of this community.

Sir, I have the honor to come here to-day to listen to these very interesting exercises, and participate in the great pleasure which we all have felt in this peaceful, rural, peculiarly New England celebration of a grim and ghastly scene, well described by the Rev. Mr. Wilson as a "grizely" one. I can tender to you here, at all events, the congratulations on this day of the Old Colony where I was born, and whence my maternal ancestry is derived. My collateral ancestor, Peregrine White, in his boyhood may have played with this very sword which lies at my feet, which I am told was brought over in the "Mayflower," upon which vessel he was born, in 1620, in the harbor of Provincetown. From that great stock of empire I have the honor to claim direct descent through an ancestor who arrived in the "Fortune" in 1621, the first ship that came to the relief of the Pilgrims of Plymouth after the "Mayflower" left.

Now, sir, if I shall not trespass too long upon your patience and that of this audience, I should like to say a few words about the Indians themselves, and to present them, or some of them, in a different light from that in which we naturally would regard them, upon this day. When the Pilgrim ancestors of our Old Colony came to Provincetown they commenced, you know, in carrying off the Indians' corn, at Gurnet, or Truro, by trespassing upon the rights of the natives, for which I believe they afterwards did their very best fully to atone. It was at Eastham, on the Cape, that they had

the first contest with the Indians, when they were looking for the spot of settlement, which they called the First Encounter. It was at Cape Cod, and they returned, when nearly famished to Plymouth, and there from the Indians they bought and paid for the corn which saved the famishing settlement at Plymouth. From the Indians of that part of the country our fathers received only kindness and acts of friendship. When a boy strayed from Plymouth to Sandwich through the woods, and being taken up there was carried on through the Cape towns to Eastham, the site of the then powerful tribe of Nausets, an expedition, of which Standish and Winslow were at the head, went to look for him. And at Barnstable, and Yarmouth where I was born, — in Yarmouth, they were, as they have thankfully recorded, courteously entertained by that noble young Indian chief, only twenty-eight years of age, tall, stately, manly, noble as a forest pine, whom they called the courteous sachem of the Mattakeesetts; and when they wanted water he brought it to them with his own hands in the night time, and carried them on, as pilot and guide, to Eastham, where after a short negotiation with the Nausets, a hundred of them brought off to the boat of the Pilgrims the lost boy; and when they went on shore and found a squaw standing there who wept, as they say, profusely, and they asked her why she wept, our fathers were told that she was thinking of her boy who, in 1607, had been carried away with six other young Cape Indians, and sold into slavery by one of the companions of John Smith in his famous New England expedition. So it is well for us to remember this day that the Indians had some cause, or thought they had, of wrong against our fathers. Of this famous chieftain of the Wampanoags, great, wily, dark savage though he was, certainly nothing more can be said than that our fathers were growing and planting their settlements, and that he realized that then, if ever, was the time when it should be determined whether the white race should possess the soil, and the Indians should pass away from it forever. What wonder then that fighting according to the custom of his kind he waged a war of extermination against the whites.

But, sir, our fathers in the Old Colony had done their duty by the Indians in that quarter. Eliot, the great apostle, had visited Yarmouth in 1656, five years after this settlement, eighteen years after the settlement of that town, to see what could be done to reclaim the Indians there, and after him came Pastor Thornton, of Yarmouth, the third minister who had left England because he

would not submit to the act of conformity, who at once set himself to work to reclaim and civilize the Indians there. They were more numerous at the time of King Philip's war on the Cape than the white people were. It was a region eminently fitted to their wandering habit of life. The fish swam in the sea; the shell-fish were embedded in the shore; the waters were alive with fowls; the woods were thick with deer. "There," said Hawley, who had been a missionary to the Six Nations of New York, "there was the Indians' paradise." Other good men besides Thornton endeavored to Christianize and educate the Indians. There were the Bournes, of Sandwich, and the Tuppers. There was Mayhew at Martha's Vineyard, who had great influence over the Indians on the island. There was, above all, Samuel Treat, the first minister of Eastham, on the Cape, whose grandson, Robert Treat Paine, was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, who wrote to Cotton Mather, from Eastham, "I have taken under my bishopric all the Indians of Provincetown and Yarmouth." He was a man of great presence, of loud and commanding voice, which, it is said, used to be heard from his little meeting-house there, even above the storms that howled, over the plains of Nauset. Fond of simple merriment—and he, more than any man of all the laborers among the Indians, seems to have given his whole heart to them,—he visited them in their wigwams; he attended their rude entertainments; he taught them to read and write; he translated portions of the Bible into the Indian tongue; he even introduced magistracy among them. And this was before the period of King Philip's war. And so it happened, Mr. President, that when that war broke out, although our people upon the Cape and upon the islands were less in number than the Indians who surrounded them, innumerable almost as the leaves of the forest; hence, it happened, that not an Indian from that region joined in the war against the people of Medfield. If they had joined their brothers and followed the banner of the chief of the Wampanoags, to whom they owed obedience, nothing could have saved the colonies of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay. The shock must have been irresistible. But because they were peaceable and remained at home, it happened that our people of the Cape, when Rehoboth and the other towns in the Old Colony were burned, were enabled to write to their distressed brethren: "Come to us and live with us until this storm of war is past." Hence it was that we were able to send, under the leadership of Hinckley, of Barnstable (afterwards Governor, and the last



Governor of the Old Colony), a band which rendered most efficient service in the war against King Philip. And it is characteristic of the great spirit of our fathers and of our mothers that on the day when Hinckley was in the swamp-fight where King Philip fell, his wife, bearing to him a daughter in Barnstable, and desiring that it should be christened on the very day, in that day of peril and intense anxiety, the husband and the father fighting the savage far away, directed the minister to christen her child "Reliance" in token that she relied upon the God of battles; and Reliance grew up to marry the first minister of Harwich, on the Cape, and to become the ancestress of many illustrious citizens.

So, sir, we of the Old Colony cannot regard the Indian as the monster which it would be natural for him to be considered by the people of this region which he devastated. I will take a moment longer to remind you that we remember instances in which the Indians amongst us showed that they remembered acts of kindness with gratitude, and that they loved the friends of the Indian. When Pastor and Missionary Treat died, one of those terrible snow-storms had fallen which sometimes block up our narrow roads upon the Cape, so that for many days in those primitive times it was impossible to break out a roadway. The Indians came and begged that they, who despised manual labor as a rule, might be allowed to dig out a tunnel through the snows, and upon their shoulders they bore the revered pastor and friend to his grave. By Indian hands he was buried. And when the great-grandchild of Bourne, who had procured from the Colonial Legislature the grant of a township of land containing ten thousand acres, for the use forever of the Mashpee Indians, — when this great-grandson of Bourne was lying grievously ill, and past medical skill as it was thought, the Indian medicine-men came to the house and begged that they might be allowed to do something to relieve the sufferings of the descendant of their benefactor; and the family tradition is that the Indian pow-wows brought him back to life and health.

The Rev. Dr. Alden, who was born in Yarmouth, wrote in 1792 that within the memory of men still living there were more Indians in that town than white people. If the Indians of the Cape did not join in the war of King Philip, it was not because they were not possessed of warlike spirit. For when Captain Thatcher raised his company in Yarmouth to go to the siege of Louisburg thirteen Indians went with him, and it was one of the Yarmouth Indians that entered first the bastion of the great fort at Louisburg. We

enlisted them again in the Revolutionary War, and in the War of the Rebellion the descendants of the tribe of Mashpee fought upon the side of the Union,—and unfortunately those of the Indians who went to the wars seldom or never returned.

My father, the pastor for many years of the Congregational Church in Yarmouth, took me when a little boy to see the last survivor of all the great numbers of Indians who once lived in the lower towns of the Cape, when our fathers came here, and when Medfield was ravaged two centuries ago. They all passed away, by that inexorable law which decrees death to the Indians in the presence of the white man, except in the town of Mashpee, which still remains occupied by the descendants of the Indians, now few in number, who are the first of their race who have ever been enfranchised, relieved from tutelage, and declared to be citizens,—Mashpee having been created a town in 1870. And in the following year I had, as candidate for Representative to the General Court, the honor of receiving the first Indian votes ever thrown anywhere in this country.

Only the summer before last I went on Sunday to attend religious worship in their little church, still standing in the primeval forest in solitude, and listened to their rude exercises, and heard their primitive hymns; and to-day, therefore, I would say, in conclusion, that I feel justified, representing that region which did so much by its efforts and by its influence upon the Indians to save the colonies in the war of King Philip, in the name of these late constituents of mine, who, though of Indian origin, are nevertheless peaceful and obedient and worthy citizens of the Commonwealth, to tender from them, the descendants of the peaceful Indians of the Cape, to you, the descendants of those whom their kinsmen ravaged and spoiled two hundred years ago, to-day the olive-branch of peace.

The PRESIDENT.—After this most eloquent defence of the Indians, it may be appropriate for me to read a sentiment, which I trust will find a response in your hearts, though he who had been expected to respond to it, a former commissioner of the Indians, is not present:—

“The remaining tribes of Indians in our land,—we will harbor towards them no feeling of revenge for the deeds of their fathers, but pity them for the wrong they are made to endure, and seek their welfare by the cultivation of mutual peace and mutual helpfulness.”

I will next give you a sentiment in relation to Dedham : —

“Our good old mother Dedham, — we would never forget the excellent character which has always belonged to her, nor cease to cherish and exhibit a grateful and faithful attachment to her.”

No one volunteering to respond, the President read the next toast, as follows : —

“Our friends, citizens of the adjoining towns which were once part of the town of Medfield, — we cherish toward them an attachment which we hope will be preserved and strengthened by mutual expressions of confidence and sympathy.”

Responded to by the Rev. THURON BROWN, of Norwood, as follows : —

RESPONSE OF MR. BROWN.

*Mr. President :* —

I simply rise to decline to make a speech. I don't feel indigenous or aboriginal to this part of the country ; but still I can claim, perhaps, a little connection with this occasion, and with the subject before us, so universally interesting. I suppose I should not have been here if King Philip had not been a very humane man, and one who was true to his friends ; and, as it happened, my emigrant ancestor, old John Brown, was a friend of King Philip's father. The old sachem used to call upon him where he lived, out not very far from Bullock's Cove as it now is, with his son James, and becoming very friendly to him and his family. When the old man died he charged upon his sons Philip and Alexander to always be friendly to Mr. Brown's family. So when the surrounding towns were burned, and the stockades were invaded, and all the places of treasure-storing and of refuge were assailed by the Indians under the lead of King Philip, Mr. Brown's family was unmolested : and so in consequence of that I claim that I owe to King Philip's humanity and forbearance my present place in this land of the living, and my opportunity to rise up and decline making a speech.

The President read the next sentiment as follows : —

“The towns of Sturbridge and Southbridge, — although no longer bearing their mother's name, may they continue to gratify her mater-

nal pride, and to fulfil her maternal hopes, by their eminence in all that constitutes the true honor and prosperity of a community."

I will ask H. D. HYDE, Esq., of Boston, a native of Sturbridge, to respond to this sentiment.

REMARKS OF MR. HENRY D. HYDE.

*Mr. President, Ladies, and Gentlemen:—*

It is with no small degree of satisfaction and pleasure that I have come to-day to participate with you in the exercises of this occasion. There are four of us here to-day, representing your daughter, New Medfield, as it was originally called when first chartered by the Legislature. Sturbridge, as it is now called, was a name taken some years after, and then what was originally New Medfield has since been divided into the two towns of Sturbridge and Southbridge. It was pleasant this morning, as our friend, Mr. Bishop, was mentioning over the names of the ancient citizens here, to find how familiar they were and have always been to my ears. The Wheelocks, the Masons, the Plymptons, the Morses are all names that are familiar in Sturbridge; and so with the Wights and the Fisks; and there are quite a number of names that I find recorded in the annals of this town which are common names with us. It is a well-known fact that there were three applications made by the inhabitants of Medfield to the Legislature for permission to settle in what was then called one of the Plantations, in the interior of the State, and an unbroken wilderness.

The first knowledge we have that Sturbridge, or that portion of the State, was known except to the Indians was when, thirteen years after the landing of the Pilgrims, John Oldham reported through the Indians that there was a mine of black-lead, or plumbago, in that locality. That mine was soon after worked, when the town was settled, and continued to be within my remembrance. It has since been discontinued because of larger deposits elsewhere; but the property is still owned by the Tudor family of Boston, and the mine was for many years worked very successfully.

As before stated, there were three applications made to the Legislature to settle this locality. The first was made in 1727, and was denied; the second was made in 1729, and was also denied; but later in the year, a third application was favored by the Legislature, and permission was given the applicants, from the

town of Medfield, to go there and settle, provided that within seven years there should be fifty families located there, and that each family should erect a house, eighteen feet square, should break up and bring into tillage seven acres of land, should settle an orthodox minister, and give him his share of the land. They went there in the fall, probably, of 1730. At first but a few went; later in the next year several families followed. Two of the first settlers from here were of the name of Fisk, and they settled in that portion of the town which has ever since borne the name of Fisk Hill. There was another hill over opposite, known as Shumway Hill, settled from this town. The first winter the Fisk brothers spent in town they were alone; and they supposed they were the only inhabitants of that region. But one clear afternoon, while engaged in chopping, they heard the sound of a distant axe, and also the person using that axe heard the sound of their axe; and so following the sounds of the axes, they approached each other, until they reached the banks of the Quinnebang River, each until then supposing he was the only inhabitant of the wilderness. They each felled a tree, and thus making a bridge crossed the river, exchanged civilities, after which each returned to his locality, remained there, and continued the work of clearing the forest.

This morning, when your orator was saying that in some portions of the town some people were denied the privilege of having chickens, I was reminded of a tradition that the early settlers were content with beans, and that that was the principal article of diet. The story goes that one Fisk went and put a pot of beans upon the kitchen fire as he and his brother went out to their daily avocations. When they came home at night they found that a high wind, which had arisen during the day, had blown a large stone down the chimney and tipped over the pot of beans; and New Medfield that night, it is said, went supperless to bed.

A school was established in 1730, and two years later incorporated by the Legislature. The first house of worship was dedicated soon after.

It seems, in those early days, there were frequent visits back and forth between the people of New Medfield and Old Medfield, and I have often heard my mother tell of her grandmother going back and forth to this town on visits to her old friends here, the journey being made upon horseback. My direct ancestors on my mother's side came from this town, and bore the name of Wight. I believe there are several remaining in this town of that name.

My great-grandfather's name was David Wight. He was born here in 1730, I think. His wife was Catharine Morse. They were married here, moved to Medway, kept hotel there a short time, and then moved to New Medfield. My great-grandfather there purchased a thousand acres of land, paid \$4,800 for it, and settled near the centre of the town, where many of his descendants reside until the present. Two of their descendants, besides myself — David and William Wight — are here to-day. Some of you, I think, have heard before the story that is told of my grandfather, Capt. Alpheus Wight, who went from here when he was three years old, and passing down through Charlton woods on the second day before reaching Sturbridge, tumbled off from the load of goods into a ravine. What he might have accomplished but for this accident it is impossible for any one to say ; but as it was, he lived to the good old age of eighty, and became the father of fourteen children, all of whom lived to grow up.

They tell the story that the name of the first school-master there was not like the one we read of in the legend of Sleepy Hollow, Ichabod Crane, but Ichabod Spooner Crane ; that he was directed to instruct the youth of the town ; and that he used to go about from house to house, instructing them in the New England primer and Dilworth's spelling-book. He was allowed to omit so much of the spelling-book as he thought would be of no practical use. When the pupils had grown up and were nearly ready to graduate, the story is told that he was in the habit of exercising them in the Psalter, and also in the first book of Chronicles, the 10th chapter of Nehemiah, and any portion of the Bible where he could find a full page of Hebrew names.

It is said of my direct ancestors, Mr. David Wight and his wife, she who was Susan Morse, that they were frugal, industrious people, who pursued the even tenor of their ways, except that it is said (though probably it is not true) that she was a little more ambitious than he, and was rather wont to jog his slower steps, and was generally the pushing one of the two ; at least, whether she would let him or not, or whether he relied so much upon her judgment, after he had been up and looked at two tracts of land, each of a thousand acres, he declined to make any purchase until she should have gone up and visited it ; so she went on horseback and visited the two tracts. He abided by her judgment, and took the one where they settled. I have often heard the old people speak of seeing her go to church (I don't remember her), and that until

she was past eighty she used to go on horseback, riding with apparent vigor ; and also, it is said, that she always hitched her horse to the lightning-rod. I suppose her idea was that electricity was cheaper than oats.

The names which I have been accustomed from my earliest childhood to hear spoken of as these of citizens of our town are names, as I have said, they are also familiar to you here. They are common names with you and common names with us. "New Medfield" was the name by which the town was early known ; although let me say that Southbridge before it was set off (I suppose the idea came from the fact of the good character of this town ; it was at first simply a portion of Sturbridge, although it is now the larger of the two) was known by the name of Honest-town. The names that are familiar to my ears are the same that are familiar to you. Our ancestors are common. In early days they were here together and then separated. Back and forth they went several times, until finally I suppose that for the most part we are strangers to each other, although our fathers knew each other well. Another incident is told that the oldest son of David Wight once came down to Medfield to make a little visit and call upon his friends. On his way back he fell in with a young lady of this town, who was coming up to visit some of her relatives there, and then it was the old story. He married her soon after she arrived. So there are many things which tie us together,—New Medfield and Old Medfield.

One of the earliest settlers from Medfield was Mr. Moses Marcy, who was often spoken of as the first citizen of the town. Two of his direct descendants have attained honorable distinction, — Hon. William L. Marcy, Governor of New York, and Secretary of State under President Pierce, and Miss Charlotte Cushman, to whose memory Boston is this day paying the last tribute of respect.

It is certainly not without a good deal of pleasure that four of us have come here to-day as representing the town of New Medfield. We hope four years hence to celebrate the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the town of New Medfield. We cannot wait until the second century comes round, for fear we may not be there, and so we want you to come up when our celebration takes place. We are afraid in fifty years some of you may not be here.

It is a very pleasant thing, allow me to say, for these towns to keep up their identity, — for them to keep up this spirit of township, this spirit which, after all, lies at the foundation of what there is in

our government which is a thing of value. When the town organization shall have disappeared, and the interest in the town government shall be stricken out, the larger pillars will also fall and crumble to pieces. It was by this spirit that our fathers were able, after the Revolution, to organize a system of government. It was by this spirit that we have been able to go thus far in our career of peaceful government. And it has been said, I think wisely, that had this same system of township organization, and town government, and town authority which has existed in New England, prevailed in the Southern States, the last war would never have been possible.

It is a pleasant retrospect to look over the history of these towns, and find out how much there is of interest, and how much comes back of old association.

Thus it is that history goes forward making her great progress, and thus it is that our fathers participated in it; and soon we shall have fulfilled our course here and shall have passed on. It is pleasant, therefore, to come together, as we come to-day, to speak of our ancestors, of their common hopes and fears, of their joys and desires, if by chance we may thus be impelled in some small degree to emulate their example:—

“We tread the paths their feet have worn,  
We sit beneath their orchard-trees,  
We hear, like them, the hum of bees,  
And rustle of the bladed corn;  
We turn the pages that they read,  
Their written words we linger o’er;  
But in the sun they cast no shade,  
No voice is heard, no sign is made,  
No step is on the conscious floor!”

The President then read an interesting sentiment, as follows:—

“Our forefathers and foremothers, the founders of our village,—rejoicing in our present prosperity, much of which we owe to the spirit which they unconsciously transmitted to their descendants, we remember, and will hand down the memory of their enterprise and their sufferings to the generations which shall follow us.”

The PRESIDENT. — I would ask the Rev. Mr. HAMMOND, of



Monson, who is allied to us by regular descent from the founders of the village of Medfield, to respond to this sentiment.

REMARKS OF REV. CHARLES HAMMOND, OF MONSON.

Having the opportunity some months since, to examine the town records of Medfield—a favor several times granted to me,—I found the fragment of a very ancient document, to which was appended the signatures of very many of the “forefathers, the founders of this your village.” The names of the “foremothers” were wanting.

In the “Annals of Dedham,” by Herman Mann, I have since found this document printed entire, with the names of forty-three signers. It is a compact or league of the subscribers, whereby they formed “a society for removing to Medfield.” This compact was most carefully prepared, and as it relates to the regulations for the settlement of the new plantation, it must be considered as the document which introduces the proper civil history of the town.

This compact shows who the forefathers were, and the motives, purposes, and principles which controlled the policy of the first settlers, and so became influential in determining the character of the people, in succeeding generations.

The provisions of this original compact of the “forefathers” of Medfield, are very remarkable, and have no precedents so far as known. One article of the compact pledges the real endeavor “to resolve and issue” in “a peaceful manner,” “differences, questions, or contentions, in our own town, before they come to a place of public judicature.” Another article provides, a “faithful endeavor” that “only such be received to our society and township as we may have satisfaction in; that they are honest, peaceable, and free from scandal and erroneous opinions.”

The “forefathers” who signed the Medfield compact were all, doubtless, emigrants from Great Britain, most of them genuine “first-comers,” constituting heads of “endless genealogies.”

The first signer of this compact, and doubtless its author, and the leader of the enterprise, was Ralph Wheelock, and for this reason he deserves a special notice. There are many other names on the list worthy of commemoration.

Ralph Wheelock was a non-conformist minister in England, though he never had a charge in this country. He was born in the county of Shropshire, or Satop, as often called, and graduated at

Cambridge University, being a member of Clare Hall College, where he received his degree of A. M., in 1631. He was a contemporary of John Milton, at Cambridge, who took his Master's degree in 1632. When he lived at Dedham he was a school-master, an office his fellow-collegian Milton held with honor. After he removed to Medfield he was a civil magistrate, and occasionally preached as a supply for vacant churches. Having a great tact for practical affairs, he was much employed in public services, being regarded as one of the most learned and at the same time one of the most useful and judicious citizens of the colony.

His son, Captain Eleazar Wheelock, settled as a pioneer emigrant in Mendon. He was an heroic officer in King Philip's war, and yet in times of peace he lived on excellent terms with the Indians, treating them with great kindness and humanity, and often joining with them in the chase. His son, having the ancestral passion for emigration, settled in Windham, Conn., in 1702. He was the father of Rev. Dr. Eleazar Wheelock, of Lebanon, Conn., celebrated as the founder of Moors' Charity School for Indian youth, and also of Dartmouth College. His son, Dr. John Wheelock, succeeded him as the second President of Dartmouth.

Other families of the first generation of residents in this town have an illustrious record of transmitted names and influence and fame in all the learned professions, and in all honorable callings, which could be easily made to appear, if the time would permit.

There are very many New England towns which, having a hundred years of history and more, can commemorate this Centennial year, the local events connecting them with the struggle for our common liberty made secure forever by the Revolution of 1776.

But the towns are very few having a history of two hundred years and more, as this town has, and has the responsibility of recalling, by a commemoration like this, the local incidents of that most terrible war in which the lives of all that lived in the feeble settlements of Eastern Massachusetts, and of all New England, indeed, were in the utmost peril, and when all the preceding endeavors to plant on these wild shores the precious germs of American civilization were in danger of utter annihilation. Such was the peril of the ancestors of us all living here in 1676, two hundred years ago this very Monday morning.

The object of this historic festival then is of greater importance than the exhilaration which the occasion excites during these passing exercises. Its true intent is to force our thoughts and sympa-

thies far back into the distant past, and impel us to look at the terrific condition of our forefathers and foremothers, and consider what it cost them to cross the mighty sea, to penetrate that pathless wilderness then overspreading all these meadows, fields, and hills, and to risk the fearful perils that hovered around exposed and defenceless homes, ready to be ravaged any day and any hour, by the torch and tomahawk of the relentless savage.

Yet the courage of our ancestors, to endure and dare just such real perils as this celebration has so vividly revealed to us all to-day, was needed, in order to lay a foundation, deep and abiding, for the growth and culture of this beautiful village, in these later days, which you all love so well, and which it is the object of this commemorative festival to make you and your children love more and more.

The PRESIDENT. — I will next read the following sentiment :

"The delegation representing the New England Historical and Genealogical Society, — honored by their presence to-day, we would assure them of our lively interest in the aims of the Society which they represent, and of our cordial congratulations upon the increasing favor with which it is so generally regarded by the public."

In the absence of Rev. Dr. RUSSELL, of Holbrook, chairman of this delegation, I will call upon Mr. D. T. V. HUNTOON, of Canton, to respond to this sentiment.

#### REMARKS OF D. T. V. HUNTOON.

*Mr. President, Ladies, and Gentlemen : —*

We come here to-day to represent a society which has for the past thirty years been striving in every way to collect the mouldering documents which cumber the attics of the old houses of New England. Very little credit, perchance, we get for it. But once in a while there are those who are very glad indeed to come to us and ask us who were their great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers ; and very often we can tell them. Such is the value of records.

But, ladies and gentlemen, it is not alone the society which I represent to-day that has brought me to Medfield for the first time in my life : but it is because I appreciate and love everything which relates to the history of New England. Above all, I love every

thing which pertains to dear old Norfolk County, where I was born.

The gentleman from Sandwich has spoken to you of the Indians in his vicinity,—the Mashpee Indians. I was born upon a plantation where the friendly Indians once lived, the Ponkipog Plantation. The gentleman also alluded to the Apostle Eliot. He told you of his work upon the Cape. Allow me to say that just two hundred years ago, John Eliot petitioned the town of Dorchester to reserve six thousand acres of land for the benefit of the Indians, in order that they might worship God in peace. They reserved six thousand acres of land, which is now situated in the town of Canton, then Dorchester. Gookin calls it "The Second Praying Town." There, every fortnight, the good old man John Eliot came and held his meeting. There he taught them the use of the alphabet, and there he instructed many of them in the work of the ministry, and when he died—this "Apostle to the Indians," as he is often called—his mantle fell upon our first minister, the Rev. Joseph Morse, who was a native of your town, and who, in the year 1707, came to our little settlement—our little township of perhaps twenty or thirty families,—and there ministered for some thirty years to the people of the old parish; and in this work he was aided by his wife, Amity Morse, who opened a little school for the Indians, and taught them to read the Psalter and the New Testament. The days passed on, and still the Indians attended his little church. But when a larger and more pretentious edifice was erected, and the Rev. Samuel Dunbar was called to minister to the people of Stoughton, as the place then came to be called, the Indians said that they could not understand Mr. Dunbar. They knew of but one Indian who ever attended Mr. Dunbar's ministry, and he was now dead,—too much "Gospelization"!

These Ponkipog Indians were always friendly to the white settlers, and one of their sachems lost his life in a battle with King Philip's men. There are none of unmixed blood remaining in my native town to-day. Half-breeds and quarter-breeds gain a precarious living by fishing, or picking cranberries in the bogs around Ponkipog Pond; but the aborigines of two centuries ago have departed, and forever.

Permit me, Mr. President, in closing, to express the hope that the celebrating of such important anniversaries as the present will create a deeper interest in the historical associations which cluster around our own homes; and I thank you, sir, in behalf of the New England Historical and Genealogical Society, for the "lively interest

in our aims," and "cordial congratulations" in our success, which you have so kindly expressed.

THE PRESIDENT. — In the eloquent address that we heard this morning, the town of Deerfield was spoken of as associated in the devastation that resulted from King Philip's war. Deerfield was originally a part of Dedham, and so connected with Medfield. I had hoped to present to you a representative from Deerfield; but, instead, I have to read to you a communication from him, and a sentiment he has sent which you will be pleased to hear.

DEERFIELD, Feb. 18, 1876.

*Charles C. Sewall, J. M. R. Eaton, and others:—*

I have received your kind invitation to join with you in the second Centennial, commemorative of the burning of Medfield in 1676. I would gladly be with you, but reasons that seem imperative present themselves as obstacles. I feel proud and grateful for having been selected as the representative of my dear old town, on this interesting occasion; and, in her behalf, would send greeting, with the following sentiment:—

"Medfield and Deerfield, both fields of historic fame, united in the olden time, in a measure by a common ancestry, and more strongly by a kindred fate,—may they continue to be united by a common sentiment of tender veneration for the fathers, and a grateful acknowledgment of what they did and suffered, that they might leave for us the glorious heritage around us and an honored name."

I remain, gentlemen, very gratefully and respectfully yours.

GEO. SHELDON.

THE PRESIDENT. — I give you now:—

"The cause of education,—dear alike to the past and the present generations, and long and eminently served by a family proud to own their nativity here."

I will call upon Mr. EDWARD A. H. ALLEN, of Sherburne, to respond.

REMARKS OF MR. EDWARD A. H. ALLEN.

*Mr. President:—*

The addresses of the morning and of the afternoon have all, with slight exception, fallen in with the prevalent feeling in New Eng

land, that the Indians are our natural enemies, and that it was our ancestors' duty not only to defend their land and homes from the savages, but to carry to them war and desolation. In another spirit, just two centuries ago, possibly at this very time of the year, was a small party of Indians going through the depths of the snow in the trackless forests near one of the Great Lakes, on a mission, I was about to say, of Christian piety. It *was* a mission of Christian piety ; for it was then, or just before, that the heroic young Catholic priest, Father Marquette — after his discovery of the Mississippi, and after teaching with such fidelity the converts to Christianity among the Western tribes — had fallen under the great duties and labors of his calling, and had died in the wilderness ; and that little band of Indians was seeking his last resting-place. They found it. They took up most tenderly the bones of him who had been their guide, their instructor, their Christian pastor, and bore them away to the white settlement, where they were afterward buried.

Now the sentiment manifested by these Western converts corresponds with that shown by the Indians on the Cape. It was the result of the humane treatment received by them in a distant part of our land, and from another race, — the French ; and so, while we honor the character our ancestors bore, and the deeds they performed, we yet can unite with those of a different faith from most of us, in honoring also the devotion which the Jesuit Fathers gave to their work of converting the Indians in the West. The incident I have related occurred at the very time that these beautiful towns of dear New England were devastated by King Philip and his savage warriors.

The PRESIDENT. — I give you now : —

“The pastors of the churches of Medfield, — cherished in the affections and the memories of those to whom they ministered, and of the whole community, whose most sacred interests they have labored to promote.”

I would call upon the Rev. Mr. BUSH, one of the ex-pastors, to respond to this sentiment.

REMARKS OF REV. S. W. BUSH.

*Mr President : —*

Our orator this morning (and I use the word “orator” with emphasis and meaning) gave to us a graphic picture of the

heroism of Mr. Wilson, the first pastor of Medfield, detailing vividly the story of his courage on that memorable occasion, for which we now revere his memory, and I must confess that it appeared to me that it required almost as much courage in this late hour after listening for so long a period as this audience has listened to the varied speeches that have been made, so full of incident and story and graphic eloquence, — I say it seemed to me as if it required almost as much courage to face an audience that had been put to so severe a test in point of time (though not in the way of dull speeches) as it did to face the Indians; but in my humble way I must endeavor to do my part.

The town of Medfield is very dear to me, associated as it is with some of the dearest and most sacred memories, as well as with some of the most endeared and lasting attachments of my life. I am also called at this time to speak especially of the early pastors of New England; for I think there is no class of men to whom New England, in all that she is, in all that she has been, in all that she hopes for, there is no single class of men to which she is more indebted than to her early ministers. They were men of learning; they were men of intellectual force; they were men of high character; they were intellectual leaders as well as spiritual guides. And the graphic story which our orator told us this morning, of Mr. Wilson and his deeds in that way, is only one illustration of this truth. It applies to the town of Medfield; but if you will consult the early annals of New England, you will find all through them, in the history of the early times, that New England ministers were men who loved their labors, and left their mark, not only upon the time in which they lived, but upon the future institutions and the future history of the country.

Macaulay, if you remember, in one of those brilliant and inimitable essays of his, with that graphic delineation in which scarcely any English writer is his equal, draws a picture of the Puritan as he appeared externally, — gaunt, forbidding perhaps; though underneath all this quaintness and coldness and apparent severity was the germ of that character which made New England what it was, — or which at least impressed itself to a very great extent upon the colonies after the death of Charles I. And so, also, we may say of the early ministers of New England, that they left their impress on the history of the present age, as well as on that of the age in which they lived. Now Mr. Wilson, the first minister of Medfield, as I say, was simply an illustration of that class of men. And I

think we may say also that their successors have been men of character, or at least have left some influence on "the town." And as Mr. Hyde, in his remarks, spoke to you of that one feature, you remember that De Tocqueville, in his book on America—(I suppose the best book that ever was written on this country; certainly one in which the characteristics of our institutions are best delineated, and one in which we see the nicety and discrimination and analysis and generalization of the philosopher),—De Tocqueville says that the corner-stone of American democracy is its municipal government,—its township organization.

Now if you will read the early annals of New England, you will find that it was the ministers of New England that did very much toward giving direction and shaping to the town, and the moulding of institutions out of which sprang, not only New England, but out of which has sprung all that is vital in American democracy and in American society.

I do not claim too much for the early pastors of New England when I say they constituted the greatest and most vital intellectual and moral force that was present in those days for the shaping of American institutions and American society. But this theme is too comprehensive to form the mere subject of a speech when the hour is so near at hand when we shall be compelled to bring these exercises to a close. I can only say that it has given me great pleasure to be here to-day. I will not occupy your time farther except to say that, if there is any class of men in this country or in the world that I reverence, it is the early ministers of New England.

And now you know it was the custom of those old ministers, after they had gone through their discourses, with their "thirdly, fourthly, and fifthly," up to "twentiethly," to make an application. In imitation, therefore, of them, I will just make a brief application of my subject. It is one of the most sacred things that we can do to commemorate the past. I never fail, whenever I meet with such an occasion as this to commemorate the past, to have the feeling that the highest and best way in which we can commemorate the virtues of our ancestors and the memory of our fathers is not simply to praise them, and recount their deeds and brilliant services. A higher commemoration is when we imitate their virtues. We praise them for their fidelity to truth, to honor, and to God; but we give them a higher praise when, imitating their example and influenced by their spirit, we are alike faithful in our day.

Dr. Howe tells us, in his "Greek Revolution," of an incident



which I have repeated elsewhere, but perhaps not many of you have heard it, that a Greek chief, during that great struggle for independence, at the siege of Athens was wounded even unto death ; and there before that city, as the fight was going on, he lay, a dying soldier in the last gasp of life. An English nobleman who had seen his bravery and his heroism began to compliment him on his deeds : and he, summoning as it were the strength which came from the dying hour, waved his hand to this English nobleman, and said, "What has been has been. What has happened has happened. Now for the future." That is a good sentiment for us to remember to-day. While, then, we commemorate the virtues of the past, let us be faithful to the present, and see that we so live that the future shall be the better for our having lived.

A letter was then read from the Rev. RUSHTON D. BURR, another of the ex-pastors of Medfield :—

YONKERS, N. Y., Feb. 17, 1876.

*Rev. Chas. C. Sewall, Chairman of Committee of Arrangements, etc. :—*

DEAR SIR,—I thank you heartily for the invitation to be present at the second Centennial of the burning of your town by the Indians, but it is quite impossible for me to be with you but in spirit. In thinking of the descent of the Indians upon Medfield, my thoughts revert chiefly to the stout-heartedness of your forefathers, and your foremothers, too—why not? for the mothers suffered, certainly no less than the fathers in these old times :—to their fearful sufferings and their daily privations of every kind, for their own sake and of those who should come after them ; and so, not so much would I wish to keep in mind the Indians' share of the horrid work, as the courage which could be willing to put oneself in the way of such things, for the sacredness of homes, the welfare of man, and the glory of God.

Keeping in mind the devastations of that day—two hundred years ago—will only be worth your time and means as it shall stimulate you all to be like those old, sturdy, colonial men and women that laid the foundation of the glory of your good old State, cementing all the stones of it with the love of sound learning and the favor of Almighty God.

Coming down from 1676 one hundred years, you have much to think of in connection with the war of the Revolution ; and about one hundred years later you did your duty in helping to put down the Rebellion. May the sons and daughters of Medfield never be false to their share of any work, which it may fall to them to be engaged in.

Yours sincerely and always,

RUSHTON D. BURR.

THE PRESIDENT. — I will read the following as the last sentiment which I shall give you on this occasion : —

“The press,—the guardian of the public interests, and source of public intelligence: may it never be less vigilant, nor long have cause to communicate intelligence which shall spread alarm and anxiety through the community.”

There being no further sentiments or addresses, the exercises were closed with prayer and the benediction by Rev. Mr. CRANE, of Medfield.

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Names of slain and mortally wounded by the Indians. February 21, 1675, O. S. :

JOHN FUSSELL, slain Feb. 21, 1675.

HENRY ADAMS, slain Feb. 21, 1675.

JOHN BOWERS, Sen., slain Feb. 21, 1675.

JOHN BOWERS, Jr., slain Feb. 21, 1675.

MARGARET and SAMUEL THURSTON, mortally wounded and died Feb. 25, 1675.

THOMAS MASON, Sen., slain Feb. 21, 1675.

THOMAS MASON, son of above, slain Feb. 21, 1675.

ZACHARY MASON, son of above, slain Feb. 21, 1675.

WILLIAM WILLIAMS, soldier from Boston, slain Feb. 21, 1675.

JOHN COOPER, soldier from Boston, slain Feb. 21, 1675.

EDWARD JACKSON, soldier from Cambridge, slain Feb. 21, 1675.

JONATHAN WOOD, slain Feb. 21, 1675.

DANIEL CLARK, mortally wounded, and died April 7, 1676.

ELIZABETH SMITH, slain Feb. 21, 1675.

TIMOTHY DWIGHT, mortally wounded, died March 9, 1676.

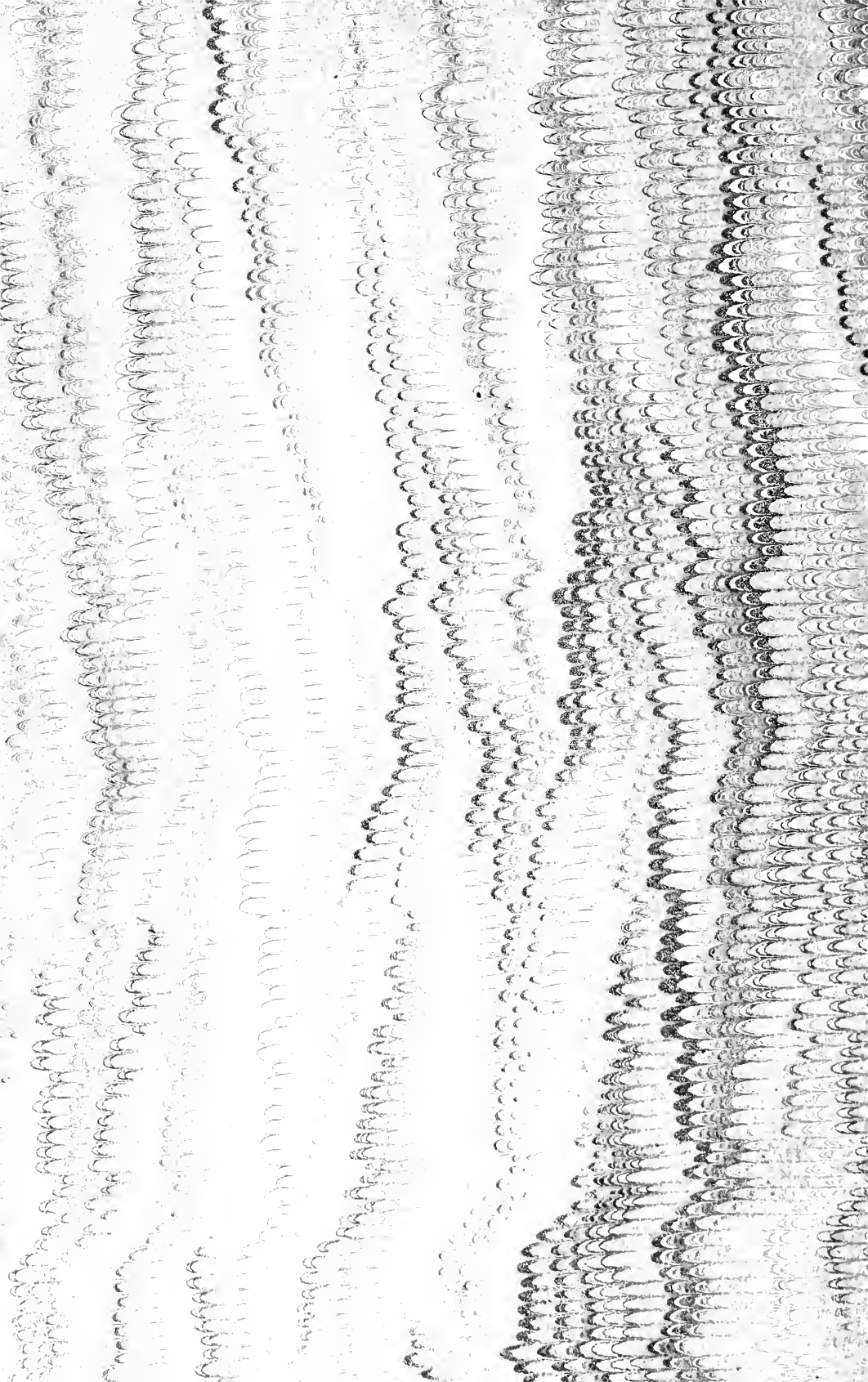
















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